

MEMORANDUM

OF THE

Board of Inspectors of Asylum and Prisons, &c., &c.

QUEBEC, May, 1860.

*Memorandum respecting the construction and management of
common gaols, &c., &c.*

In carrying into practical operation the salutary provisions of the 15th, 16th and 17th Sections of cap. 110 the Consolidated Statutes of Canada, and of the other Statutes connected with common gaols, the Board does not stand alone. The cooperation of municipalities and private individuals is required; and the Board was of opinion that they might materially assist their fellow labourers in this important work, by publishing, in a concise form, their views as to some of the leading principles which should govern the conduct of all who have any thing to do in the construction or management of prisons.

With this object the present memorandum has been prepared.

1. Prisons are intended mainly to *punish* criminals, and to *deter* those who are inclined to become such. They have, however, private objects of which the most important are the *reformation* of the prisoners, and the lodging, provisionally but safely, persons accused of crime but as yet untried.

2. The inmates of our prisons are made up of individuals differing from each other in age, in sex, in temperament, in physical habits, in religion, in education, in moral and intellectual character, and in their degrees of guilt.

3. It is self evident that the most *reformatory* prison system would be that which separates from each other the individuals, who would be likely to corrupt each other; and which submits all prisoners either individually or by classes, to such moral and sanitary treatment as is best adapted for their several cases.

4. Practically, however, there are great difficulties in the way of this therestically perfect system of classification. These difficulties arise, on the one hand, from the injury to the health and sometimes to the reason resulting from the system of long and continued solitary confinement, and on the other, from the impossibility of procuring the means required to carry into operation a system so costly as that which required separate prisons for each class of prisoners.

6. As a principle, however, it cannot be questioned that *separation* of prisoners is essential for the reformation; and that unchecked intercourse of prisoners must inevitably lead to their further corruption.

7. Every prison system should, however, imperatively enforce.

1st. An entire separation of the sexes.

2nd. A separation of old and young.

It should moreover, in one way or another, offer the means of classification and those *mechanical precautions* (in the arrangements of the buildings, &c.,) which serve to supply the place of efficient supervision.

8. Every prison system can provide and is bound to provide, in its discipline in the internal arrangements of the buildings, that punishment shall be real and proportioned to the offence, that crime shall have no chance of propagating itself either by example or precept, and that habits of industry shall be inculcated.

9. It is, however, to Religion and to it alone that we must look for the means of bringing the criminal to repent and of inspiring the depraved will with a firm determination to persevere in well doing.

For the reformation of prisoners therefore the following conditions are necessary: 1st, a conviction in the mind of the prisoner of the necessity of submission. 2nd. Strict discipline and supervision. 3rd. Just and human treatment. 4th. The enforcement of labor. 5th. The removal of all corrupting influences. 6th. Medical treatment of vicious habits. 7th. Lastly and above all, religious instruction.

To carry out this reformation, we should have prisons well constructed with a view to the health as well as the discipline of the prisoners, officers and servants carefully selected and well looked after, kind treatment of the prisoners while in prison, followed up by efforts to aid them, if well disposed, after their liberation. Educated and observing medical officers, and zealous clergymen.

In the preliminary report of the Board (laid before the Legislature during the present Session), the numberless defects of the common goals of Canada, have been pointed out. It is plain, from what is there stated, that the Reformation of our Prison system must be commenced with changes in the construction of our goals. The goals, in their present state, are an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the introduction of any sound system of prison discipline. Under these circumstances the Board has thought it advisable to publish, in a convenient shape, some of the leading principles (now generally admitted) respecting the construction of goals, in the hope that they may be found useful to all who may be interested in the subject, but especially to those who, under the provisions of the acts referred to, are called upon to cooperate with the Board in the important work of building prisons.

In all buildings intended for the reception of a large number of inmates certain conditions must be observed for their sewerage and drainage lighting, heating and ventilation. In Prisons, over and above these, there are certain peculiar provisions that must be made, of these the following may be considered as the most important:—

1. A proper place for religious worship and for religious instruction.
2. Hospitals for the sick of both sexes, one or more.
3. Bath Rooms.
4. Accommodation within the goal for the officers and servants.
5. Proper work shops.
6. Night cells.
7. Cells for solitary confinement.
8. Some spare rooms.
9. Means of classification.
10. Separate provisions for female prisoners, (all our goals being mixed.)
11. A high wall enclosing the whole of the prison ground.
12. Separate yards for males and females.

All the above mentioned requisites can be secured at a small cost, as may be seen from an examination of the explanatory sketch, annexed to this memorandum.

It may be well to notice here those particulars either of a general or special character, to which the Board attaches special importance in forming an opinion respecting any goal plans which are brought officially before it.

S I T E .

1. The site of a prison should be elevated, dry and airy.
2. The neighbourhood of running water is very desirable

3. The common gaols should be convenient to the Court House, and in the immediate neighbourhood of a city or town. It should however, be somewhat isolated from all other buildings, and the prisoners' apartment should not, under any circumstances, look out upon a public thoroughfare.

4. Every gaol, however small, should have at least one acre of ground attached to it.

CONSTRUCTION.

1. Prison architecture should be characterized by simplicity, security, convenience and economy.

2. The walls should be solid, the prison should not be more than three stories high. The windows should be placed as far above the floor as possible, so as to shut out the view of the outer world, while at the same time care must be taken that abundance of light is admitted.

3. No drain should run under the building, no cess-pool should be allowed in the neighbourhood of the main building, and the rain water from the roof should be led into the sewers to keep them clean.

4. It would be very desirable to have one or more reservoirs of good water in the upper part of the building. These reservoirs and the pipes leading to and from them (or otherwise employed in leading water into the building), should be of iron.

INTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS.

1. The floor should be of hard wood waxed.

2. The privies should be separated from the main building by a small corridor or passage open and ventilated; the seats should be made either of stone, metal or hard wood waxed.

3. The doors in the interior of the prison should be of wrought iron, open and with fixed locks.* In addition to these solid doors of either iron or wood will be necessary for the purposes of classification and discipline.

4. The cells should occupy the middle of the galleries. There should be two rows of cells in each story placed back to back; they should open upon spacious corridors, well heated, well lighted and well ventilated.

5. In common Prisons, (and where galleries with balconies are not admissible) each tier of cells should be entirely separate from the others and should have its separate set of windows, with its own means of heating and ventilating.

6. The walls separating the cells should not have any openings or pipes leading through them, which would be likely to diminish their strength or furnish the means for secret inter-communication among the prisoners.

7. The heating, lighting and ventilating of the cells must be obtained from the corridors, by means of the doors and other openings between them.

8. To secure the objects referred to in last paragraph, the openings between the corridors and cells must be ample. They should extend from the floor to the ceiling of the cell; the portion above the door should be a grating of wrought iron. In ordinary night cells the grating should be about the same width as the door: In the cells for solitary confinement the grating should be about twice as wide.

9. The ordinary night cell should be of the following dimensions: 8 feet in length, 3 feet in breadth, and 9 feet in height. The larger

* The doors of the Cells in the Provincial Penitentiary may seen as models

cells (those for solitary confinement, &c.) should be 10 feet long,* 7 feet wide,† and 9 feet high.

10. Easy means of communication should be provided between the various corridors, &c., so that the keepers can pass readily and without loss of time from any one part of the building to any other.

11. All walls, intended for the separation of different classes of prisoners, should (when doors in them are necessary) have double doors, one solid and the other open.

EXPLANATION OF THE ANNEXED PLAN.

The plan, although a mere outline, will serve, it is hoped, to make the preceding observations more easily understood. It is meant to shew the more important divisions only. The doors, stairs and other minor internal arrangements are not noticed, neither is any distribution made of the part of the building intended for the governor and keepers, &c., of the gaol. All these matters of detail are left to the architect employed, whose plans must be submitted to the Board before being adopted.

A gaol built according to the plan, herewith, would suffice for 45 prisoners, 30 males and 15 females. The plans, it should be observed, have been prepared with a view to secure the utmost economy consistent with the ends proposed.

Figure I.—Represents a part of the ground intended for the Prison, with an outline of part of the enclosing walls, the division walls and the outline of the prison: *a* is the gaol; *b, b*, two courts; *c, c*, two yards for the male prisoners; *d*, the privies and an outer passage leading from the third story into the Court yard *e*, which should serve as a yard for the female prisoners.

Figure II.—Shews the elevation of the building, and indicates the simplicity and severity which should characterise it.

Figure III.—Shews the foundation and ground plan of the building. *a* the part intended for the governor of the gaol, *b* the gaol Kitchen, *c*, the laundry *d, d*, workshop's with lines to shew the pillars of the arches supporting, the story above, *e* passage leading from the third story to the yard for the females; *f, f*, privies; *g, g*, airy corridor leading to the privies.

Figure IV.—The first flat: *a*, passage; *b*, office; *c*, apartments of the governor of the gaol; *d*, bath room for the males, serving also as a reception room for the prisoners on their admission; *e, f, f, g, g*, as in figure III, *h, j*, rooms with night cells; *k*, room with cells for solitary confinement.

Figure V.—The second story: *a, e, f, f, g, g, h, j, k*, as before; *b*, spare room; *c*, hospital for males; *d, d*, rooms to be used as chapels and schools.

Figure VI.—The third story: *a, e, f, f, g, g, h, j, k*, as in figures III and IV; *b*, hospital, for females; *c*, apartments for matron; *d*, spare room.

A little knowledge will suffice to fill up the details omitted in the plans, and thus an idea may be formed of what such a gaol would be, built according to the principles approved by the Board.

* The 2 additional feet in length should be taken from the corridor which (not being required for a working room on the side of the solitary cells) need not be so large as on the other.

† These cells are intended to be as wide as two of the small cells with the wall between them.

Fig.

f	e
g	
a	
b	
	a

Figure 1

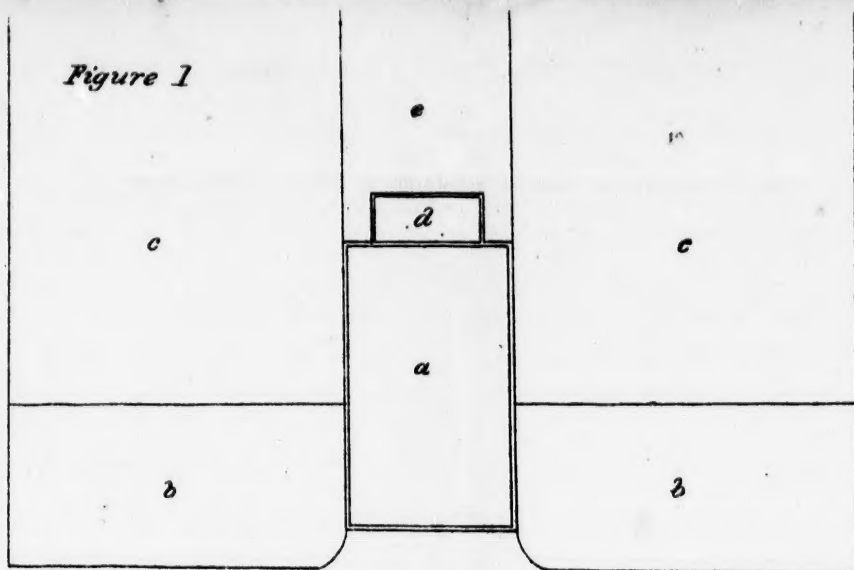


Figure II

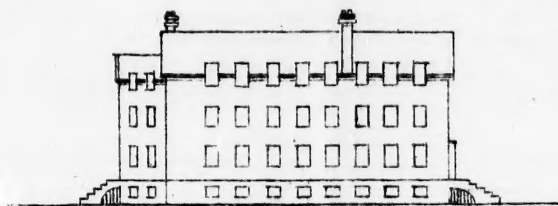


Fig. III.

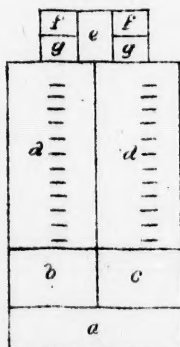


Fig. IV.

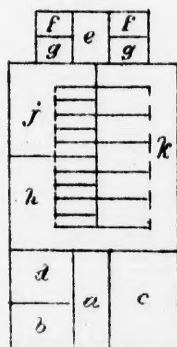


Fig. V.

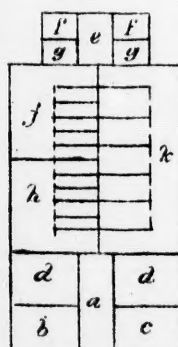
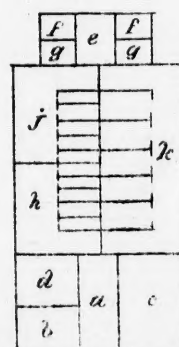


Fig. VI.



20 40 60 80 100 120

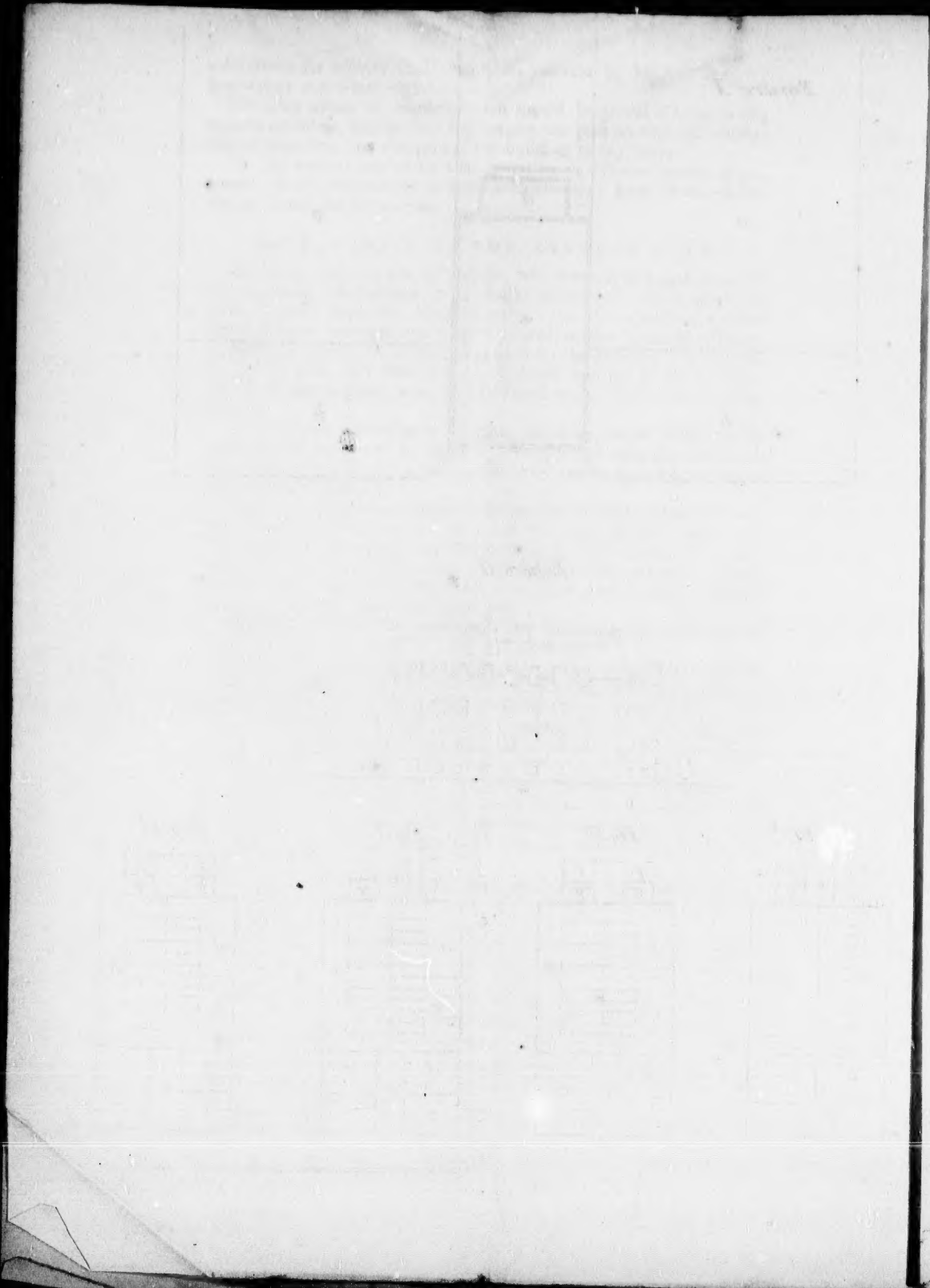


Fig. 1

f	e
g	
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Figure 1

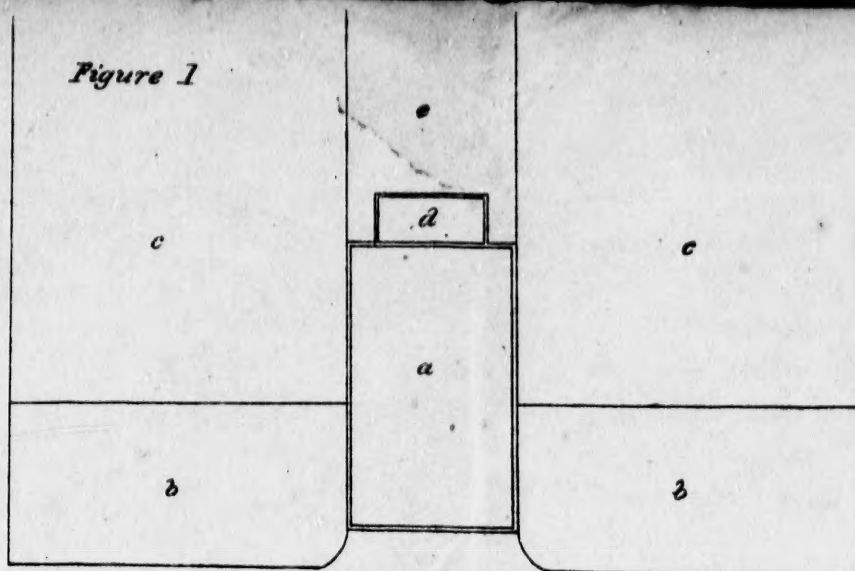


Figure II

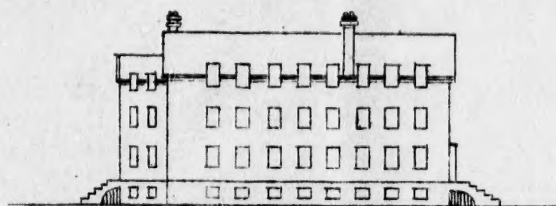


Fig. III.

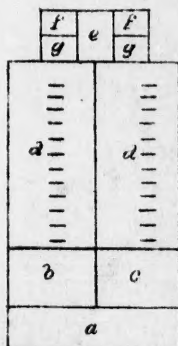


Fig. IV.

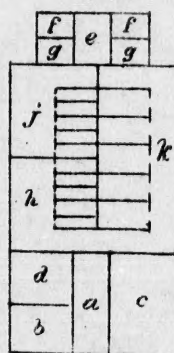


Fig. V.

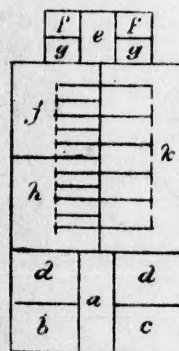


Fig. VI.

